

Today is _____, _____ the _____. This is Ken Morgan's Northcoast Ag Report, our lead story is about _____ when we return

Secretary of Agriculture Sonny Perdue is currently touring rural America on his "Back to Our Roots" RV tour.

Perdue answered a variety of questions during a Monday morning conference call with reporters. One question involved a California case in which a nursery owner named John Duarte (Doo-ar'-tay) stands accuses of violating the Clean Water Act by illegally filling in a wetland when he plowed it for wheat. The litigation began when President Obama was in office and Duarte is looking at \$2.8 million in fines. Perdue says he's aware of the case and will be looking into it further when he returns to Washington...tape

Cut 2 :36 OC..."the U.S."

He says this case could potentially send a chill over farmers across the country if they could face civil and criminal penalties for normal agricultural practices.

WEEK ENDING: August 6, 2017

RELEASED: August 7, 2017

WEATHER

Summer heat continued to prevail across the State last week, with a few isolated reports of rain. Monday thru Friday brought scattered showers and thunderstorms across the deserts, with most areas receiving up to a quarter of an inch of rain in one day. A few heavier thunderstorms just east of San Diego dropped nearly 2 inches of rain through the end of the week. Elsewhere, moisture advection combined with orographic lifting led to scattered light showers in the Sierras on multiple days. **On Sunday, a southern-track system managed to clip the northern tier of California, dropping about a quarter of an inch of rain from Redding northward. Most areas in the State were finally devoid of snowcover, but sheltered areas at higher elevations in the Lassen National Park area still contained patchy snow, along with the peak of Shasta.**

Temperature highs were in the 60s to 70s along the coast, 70s to 90s in the mountains, 90s to 100s, in the valley, and 90s to 110s in the desert.

Temperature lows were in the 40s to 60s in the mountains, 50s to 60s along the coast, 60s to 70s in the valley, and 60s to 80s in the desert.

FIELD CROPS

Corn and sorghum for silage was being cultivated and irrigated. The corn silage crop was in various stages of development from tassels to developing ears. Cotton continued to be irrigated, cultivated, and was growing well. Cotton was blooming and forming bolls. Black-eyed beans continued to be irrigated and cultivated.

FRUIT CROPS

Mid-season peaches, nectarines, and plums continued to be harvested and packed. Summer pruning and topping of harvested stone fruit groves occurred. Asian pears were being packed and exported. The table grape harvest continued with grapes packed and shipped to foreign markets. Valencia orange harvest continued, primarily for the domestic market. Regreening continued to be a problem, due to high temperatures. Valencia oranges, Meyer lemons, variegated lemons, and finger limes were being harvested, packed, and shipped for foreign markets. Olives continued to develop.

NUT CROPS

In San Joaquin County, almond orchard ground prep continued for upcoming harvest. Almond hull split was underway. In Tulare County, last season's almonds and pistachios were being packed and exported. Walnut, almond, and pistachio orchards continued to be irrigated.

VEGETABLE CROPS

In Colusa County, temperatures came down to the mid-to-high 90s, which provided a break from the triple digit heat recorded previously. Processing tomato harvest continued and quality was reported as good. In Yolo County, the processing tomato harvest was underway. In San Joaquin County, harvest continued for cucumbers, honeydew melons, watermelons, cantaloupes, Bell peppers, and sweet corn. In Monterey County, the Salinas

Valley was in a flurry with harvesting and shipping trucks. All commodities were in production and market prices were holding steady at baseline cost. Warm weather promoted seed-stem and decay in iceberg lettuce negatively affecting quality. In Fresno County, harvest continued for onions and tomatoes. The carrot harvest was about half completed. Quality was reported as good, though yields were lower than expected. Additional carrot planting was expected to start soon. Yellow peppers were prepared for harvest. In Tulare County, tomatoes, cucumbers, squash, and peppers were picked by certified producers and sold at the local Farmers' Markets. Yellow squash, zucchini, eggplant, Bell peppers, green chili peppers, and cucumbers were harvested and shipped domestically. Sweet corn harvest continued and was sold at roadside stands and local Farmers' Markets. Melons were irrigated and prepared for the upcoming harvest. In Kings County, the tomato harvest continued with a decent harvest reported.

LIVESTOCK

Non-irrigated pasture and rangeland quality continued to decline as condition reports across the state shifted into more poor and very poor categories. Supplemental feeding increased as the nutritional quality of grasses diminished. Sheep grazed on retired pasture and dormant alfalfa. Bees were active in melon and sunflower fields.

CCA Sues USFWS Over Critical Habitat Designation for Amphibians

On Monday, CCA sued the US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) for violating the Regulatory Flexibility Act (RFA), alleging that USFWS failed to consider the economic impacts of their 2016 decision to designate 1.8 million acres of land in California as critical habitat for the Yosemite toad, the Sierra Nevada yellow-legged frog, and the Northern distinct population segment of the Mountain yellow-legged frog.

CCA is represented by the Pacific Legal Foundation, and is joined in the suit by the California Farm Bureau Federation and the California Wool Growers Association.

The RFA requires federal agencies to consider the impacts of regulations upon small businesses, small organizations and local governments and to consider alternatives that may lessen economic burdens on those small entities.

The USFWS refuses to conduct RFA analyses when it designates critical habitat for threatened or endangered species, however. The agency claims it is exempt from the

Act because designations of critical habitat only regulate other federal agencies, such as the US Forest Service, not small business entities.

The Small Business Administration's Office of Advocacy, which provides federal agencies guidance on how to comply with the RFA, takes issue with USFWS' position, though, stating that "critical habitat designations have direct effects on small businesses which should be reflected in regulatory flexibility analyses." Additionally, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, which also designated critical habitat, does comply with RFA requirements, suggesting that USFWS is not, in fact, exempt from the law.

CCA is suing USFWS to ensure that the agency complies with the RFA, and to provide economic relief for ranchers whose family businesses are likely to be impacted by critical habitat designated for the three amphibian species.

For more information, contact Kirk Wilbur in the CCA office.

Support EPA Proposal to Rescind 2015 WOTUS Rule

On July 27, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) formally released a proposed rule to rescind the 2015 Waters of the United States (WOTUS) Rule, which threatened to greatly extend the agencies' regulatory jurisdiction and impose burdensome regulatory requirements upon ranchers and other landowners.

CCA strongly supports the proposal to rescind the 2015 Rule, and will file formal comments to that effect with the EPA prior to the August 28 deadline. Ranchers are encouraged to file comments supporting the 2015 Rule's withdrawal by clicking the "Comment Now!" button [here](#). The National Cattlemen's Beef Association has provided sample comments [here](#).

The move to rescind the 2015 WOTUS Rule comes after President Trump's February 28 Executive Order directing EPA Administrator Scott Pruitt to rescind the rule and replace it with a definition of "Waters of the United States" that conforms to the more limited interpretation outlined by late Supreme Court Justice Antonin Scalia in *Rapanos v. United States*. Rescinding the 2015 Rule is the first step in that process; once the 2015 Rule is repealed, the EPA will likely give notice of a proposed rulemaking establishing a more limited interpretation of WOTUS.

In the interim, the proposed rulemaking seeks to re-codify the definition of WOTUS that existed prior to the 2015 re-definition. Because the 2015 WOTUS Rule was stayed from implementation and enforcement by the 6th Circuit Court of Appeals in October 2015 in response to numerous lawsuits (including one filed by CCA), the proposed rule would essentially codify the status quo.

For more information, contact Kirk Wilbur in the CCA office.

Governor Signs State Legislation, Includes Earmark to Repeal SRA Fee

Legislation signed by Governor Edmund "Jerry" Brown on July 26, 2017 will permanently repeal the current State Responsibility Area (SRA) fee, better described as the "fire tax". The tax is currently collected on residential structures and buildings located in the SRA boundary where emergency and first responder services are more commonly provided by the California Department of Forestry & Fire Protection (CAL-FIRE). CCA opposed the SRA fee when it was first proposed in a budget trailer bill several years ago. The tax sought to fill a vacuum in funding rather than put new firefighters and firefighting equipment on the ground. The legislation was also originally adopted with a majority vote, not a 2/3 vote, as required by law to enact new taxes.

The legislation calls for the loss of current funding generated by the SRA fee to be backfilled by funds raised by the state's cap-and-trade program. Both the cap-and-trade program as well as any statutory reference to the SRA fee will be permanently repealed in 2030 without separate legislative action.

Annual Siskiyou County Cattlemen's Association Tour, Butte Valley, Aug. 26

The Siskiyou County Cattlemen's Association is hosting its annual Fall Tour in Butte Valley on Aug. 16. During the morning, the tour will kick off at Plant Sciences Inc. in Dorris to hear from the owner who is also a cattle rancher in both Northern California and Oregon. Following the tour, there will be presentations and lunch at the Dorris Community Center where Kasey DeAtley, Ph.D. will speak about practical EPD use to get your herd where you want it and Jeff Stott, Ph.D. will provide an update on Foothill abortion and his pink eye research.

For more information, please contact Cari Koopmann Rivers via [email](#).

Yolo County Cattlemen's Association to Host Fall Tour Event | Aug. 24

The Yolo County Cattlemen's Association will be hosting its annual Fall Tour Event on August 24 at the Esparto Fire Hall in Esparto. The program will begin at 5:30 pm and includes speakers and representatives from the California Cattlemen's Association, UC Extension, the Yolo County Sheriff's Department, Yolo County Ag Department, IMI Global and Western Video Market.

Following the program, a tri-tip dinner with Sid Collier's famous beans will be served. To RSVP, contact Yolo County Cattlemen's Association President, Adam Cline, at 530-723-2326 or afcline@hotmail.com.

Register Now for the August 25 Northeastern CalPLC Meeting in Susanville

The California Public Lands Council of the California Cattlemen's Association will host the first in a series of regional public lands meetings in Susanville on Friday, August 25 from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the Susanville Elk's Lodge at 400 Main Street in Susanville. This initial meeting will focus on the region encompassing the Plumas, Lassen and Modoc National Forests and the Applegate and Eagle Lake field offices of the BLM, though all public lands ranchers are welcome to attend.

The purpose of the meeting is to provide a venue for public lands ranchers to discuss matters of local importance with one another and with agency officials at the local and state levels, with the goal of identifying ways ranchers, CCA and the agencies can work collaboratively to resolve those matters. Issues to be addressed include (but are not limited to): wolves and other predators, wild horses, road closures and road maintenance, access to retired or vacant allotments, water quality, endangered species, fire control, monitoring and more.

The cost of registration is \$15, which includes morning coffee and refreshments as well as lunch. A no-host bar will also be available.

For more information and to register for the event, visit [here](#) or contact the CCA office.

BQA Training at the Sierra Foothill Research and Extension Center | Sept. 23

The Tahoe County Cattlemen's Association, Sierra Foothill Research and Extension Center and the Placer-Nevada-Sutter-Yuba UC Cooperative Extension Services will be hosting a Beef Quality Assurance workshop on Sept. 23 from 8 a.m. -2 p.m. The program will take place at the Sierra Foothill Research and Extension Center and cover a wide variety of topics including BQA, transportation, water quality self assessment and hands-on chute side demonstration.

Check back for a live link to register for this event.